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British mole tells of winning Nazi Iron Cross

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MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — A former British intelligence officer worked in the highest levels of German military intelligence during World War II and was awarded the Iron Cross while stealing military secrets, an Australian newspaper reported yesterday.

The Melbourne Age newspaper published a copyrighted story by British writer Nigel West detailing the purported spying career of Charles Henry Evans and the secrets he passed to the British.

Mr. West said Mr. Evans sent him an anonymous letter recently challenging details in Mr. West's latest book on British intelligence. Intrigued by the letter, Mr. West went to Australia with only a Melbourne postmark to guide him.

A series of interviews in the Australian media eventually led to contact with Mr. Evans, who agreed to tell his story for the first time, Mr. West said.

According to the article, Mr. Evans came to Australia in 1949 and has worked in various businesses. He is reportedly now in poor health.

Mr. West wrote that Mr. Evans, who rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Abwehr, the intelligence arm of the Nazi army, passed on such secrets as the date of the invasion of Russia, details of new weapons such as the Tiger tank and the V1 missile, and information on Nazi spies.

The Age said it had been able to substantiate parts of Mr. Evans'

story from independent sources, but gave no details.

Mr. West said Mr. Evans posed as a medical student in Germany before the war under a British plan

to infiltrate German military intelligence as a mole or dormant agent.

Adm. Hugh Sinclair, head of the British MI6 intelligence service and a friend of Mr. Evan's father, asked

Mr. Evans in 1933 to go to Germany and assume the identity of a German student who had studied in England, according to Mr. West. Mr. Evans, who was 15 at the time, spoke fluent German.

Adm. Sinclair was convinced that war with Nazi Germany was inevitable and was sure Mr. Evans would be recruited by Germany intelligence because of his English background, Mr. West said.

Mr. West said Mr. Evans told him he was recruited by the Abwehr after graduating from the medical school of Heidelberg University. Mr. Evans used his position as an Abwehr officer to pass intelligence to MI6 through a network of anti-Nazi Germans after the war began, he said.

"I was in continuous touch with London from the moment I took up my appointment with the Abwehr ... to my final escape at the end of January 1945," Mr. Evans was quoted as saying.

Mr. Evans told Mr. West that he had informed British intelligence of the secret German Tiger tank, Hitler's plans to invade Russia and an estimate of the attack date to within 24 hours, information on a German spy who had obtained details on the D-Day invasion of Europe and other top secrets.

Mr. Evans was quoted as saying he was awarded the Iron Cross by the Nazis. The Iron Cross was one of Germany's highest military decorations.